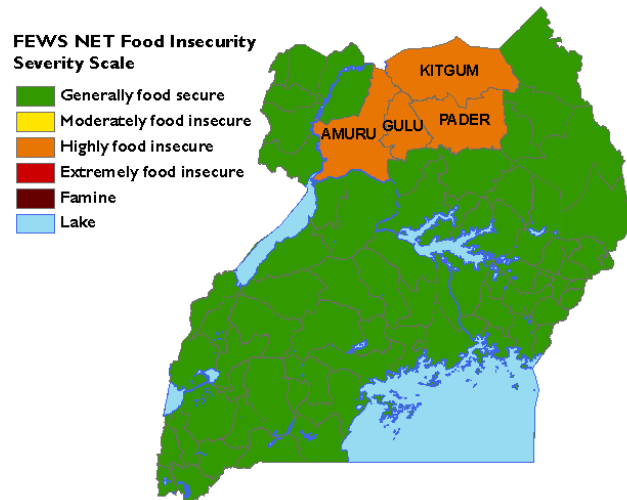


UGANDA Food Security Outlook

October 2007 to March 2008

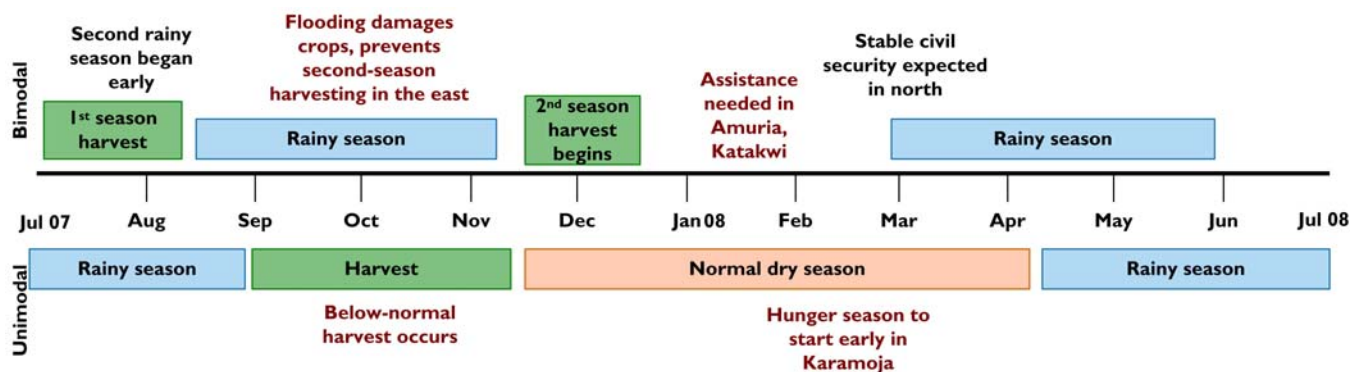
- Most households are currently generally food secure in Uganda. About 1.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the north remain highly food insecure and dependent on food assistance as a result of persistent civil insecurity over many years, although conditions in the region are continually improving. Floods in the east and a poor rainy season in northeastern Karamoja Region have increased the risk of food insecurity, but most households in these areas are still able to access food until end of year.
- Food security is expected to deteriorate in eastern and northeastern areas during the first quarter of 2008. In Amuria and Katakwi districts of Teso Region, first-season crop losses and limited ability to sow second-season crops due to flooding in August and September will reduce household food access starting in January. The poor harvest in Karamoja is expected to cause the hunger period to start early in February/March, and low livestock prices will reduce livestock/cereal terms of trade to further decrease food access. More IDPs in the north will likely be able to access their fields to harvest second-season crops, but the total number of food insecure people requiring assistance will increase to 1.4 million in this scenario.
- In the worst-case scenario, an increase in civil insecurity in the north could cause re-displacement and reduced access to harvest second-season crops. Civil insecurity related to disarmament in Karamoja could limit access to fields to harvest, leading to post-harvest losses that further reduce household food stocks and prevent sufficient food trade to increase food availability. In Amuria and Katakwi districts, sharply escalating food prices would compound the effects of reduced household access from own-consumption after the two poor harvests in 2007. The number of food insecure people would increase to 1.7 million, 1.5 million of whom would have access to food assistance given current pipelines.

Figure 1. Current estimated food security conditions, fourth quarter 2007 (Oct to Dec)



Source: MoA/GoU, WFP/UN agencies, NGOs
Graphics: FEWS NET Uganda

Seasonal calendar and critical events



FEWS NET Uganda
Kampala
Tel: 256-41-4532530
amutengu@fewnets.net

FEWS NET Washington
1717 H St NW
Washington DC 20006
info@fewnets.net

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Current food security conditions

With the exception of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Uganda, most households throughout the country are generally food secure (Figure 1). Weather shocks have negatively affected harvests in many eastern and northeastern areas during the 2007 agricultural cycle, but households are still able to generally access sufficient amounts of food in these areas.

In northern Uganda, continued peace is enabling more of the estimated 1.2 million IDPs to move to transit locations outside of camps, and some are returning home. Without a definite agreement between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and cessation of hostilities, though, many displaced households remain uncertain of the future and maintain living quarters in the camps as fall-back positions should civil insecurity erupt again. There has not been a significant improvement in services, and many IDPs, in camps or in transit, lack adequate access to health, shelter, water and sanitation facilities, resulting in poor humanitarian conditions in the region. Although access to land and production is gradually increasing, many IDPs are still far from their full potential to produce sufficient amounts of food for their own consumption. Most IDPs continue to experience widespread high food insecurity, and the World Food Programme (WFP) caters for the bulk of their food needs.

Higher-than-normal rainfall between July and October 2007 caused flooding in several districts of eastern Uganda, mainly in Teso Region. Amuria and Katakwi districts were the most affected, as floods inundated many areas, leading to the loss of nearly all first-season crops that were harvested in July/August. Additionally, the first-season (March to June/July) rains started more than six weeks late in May, causing delays in sowing, and were erratic during the season. These conditions resulted in lower-than-normal harvests and stock replenishment. An inter-agency assessment in the affected areas established that many households have limited food stocks from the first-season harvest, most of which are expected to run out by December this year. Cassava and sweet potatoes, key substitute crops for lost staples, and ground nuts were the most affected by the flooding. At the peak of the floods between September and October, high water levels covered roads, making them impassable and limiting access to many areas in Teso, hindering people's access to markets to sell commodities to earn income and purchase food. The assessment found that conditions had greatly improved by November, with many locations accessible and with significantly less impact than originally projected. Although most households in the area are still generally food secure, the total population at risk of food insecurity is about 30,000 households (200,000 people).

The floods in the east continued through the second-season cultivation period (August to September), limiting crop sowing and increasing the likelihood of low second-season crop harvests in Amuria and Katakwi districts in November and December 2007. Compounded with the fact that nearly all households in the flooded areas have lost their key substitute crops (root crops and tubers), the risk of food insecurity is high in the two districts starting from December 2007 until the next harvest in June/July 2008 (see the most-likely scenario below).

In Karamoja, multiple hazards, including delayed onset of and erratic seasonal rains, low sorghum pollination due to higher-than-normal rains at the flowering stage, ground water logging, diseases and pest infestation during the 2007 single April to October season have resulted in below-normal harvests. This has limited households' replenishment of stocks, which may only last through early 2008.

Table 1. Scenario assumptions and indicators Most-likely food security scenario

- Civil security improves in northern Uganda, enabling further resettlement and increased access to second-season harvests in early 2008
- Limited food stocks in Amuria and Katakwi districts cause moderate food insecurity for many households
- In Karamoja, the 2007 harvests enable limited stock replenishment and improved access, but the hunger season starts early in February/March
- Normal 2007 second-season harvests from November onwards support food security in most bimodal areas

Worst-case food security scenario

- Increased civil insecurity in the north causes re-displacement and limits access to fields to harvest second-season crops
- In flood-affected Amuria and Katakwi districts, food prices increase severely while income-earning opportunities are limited, further restricting household food access
- Increased civil insecurity in Karamoja restricts movement and access to markets, limiting access to alternate food sources
- Food security remains normal in bimodal areas

The below-normal production and poor road conditions following rain wash-out that occurred during the season in the region have caused cereal prices to rise, in some cases as high as 30 to 50 percent above the average. Livestock prices have decreased due to reduced purchases by traders from outside the region, who have been deterred by poor road conditions and a quarantine in Kotido against *Pest des Petits Ruminants (PPR)*, a fatal viral disease that affects sheep and goats. The high prices are reducing households' purchasing power, and the declining livestock/cereal terms of trade are further restricting food access for households that rely on livestock for income. Through mid-December, however, food security has remained stable; sporadic unseasonable rains have maintained adequate supplies of green vegetables for household consumption, and ample pasture and ground water supplies are benefiting livestock in the region. No significant outward migration to dry season grazing areas has been observed, and households with livestock continue to access adequate milk and meat and trade livestock for cereals as need arises.

Food security is normal and stable in most bimodal areas, including central, northwestern and southwestern areas, as food supplies from the July-August first-season 2007 harvests remain available. Additionally, early crop harvests from the second-season that started in November are supplementing household food access.

Currently, more than 1.2 million people face moderate to high food insecurity, primarily IDPs in the northern districts, where WFP is catering for their food needs through its ongoing Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation pipeline. In the aftermath of the floods, the Government of Uganda and WFP provided one-month, one-time food allocations to some households in the flood-affected areas of Teso Region. Following the improvement in conditions once flood waters receded, no new distributions are expected to be needed until early 2008, after the inter-agency assessment and an ongoing emergency food security assessment have establish needs in these areas.

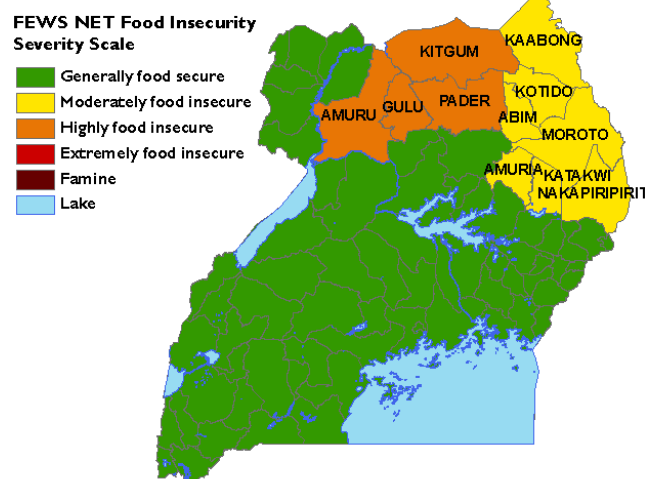
Most-likely food security scenario, January to March 2008

In the most-likely scenario through March 2008, food security decreases in eastern and northeastern Uganda as a result of limited food access following the poor harvests in these areas in late 2007 (see yellow areas in Figure 2). Elsewhere, food security conditions remain stable due to expected normal food availability, including in the north, where anticipated stable civil security enables more IDPs to return home and harvest their own food.

The limited presence of the LRA in the north is expected to result in continued relative calm in Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts. More IDPs will be able to continue resettling in this scenario, and will be able to continue harvesting their second-season crops in early 2008. Additionally, households will be able to prepare more land to sow in the first season of 2008 that starts in March/April. As the IDPs move out of camps, there will be greater need for increased health, water, sanitation, shelter and other services in resettlement areas to improve humanitarian conditions, with more emphasis shifting to long-term development in the region. Building on the gradual gains in food production in recent periods, IDP households are expected to reduce their need of external assistance by the end of 2008, at which point they would have had more than two harvests. Although food access will improve in this scenario in the first quarter of 2008, many households will still be highly food insecure and will require food assistance to address food and nutrition gaps.

As a result of the losses in the first-season crops and below-normal second-season harvests in December and January in Amuria and Katakwi districts, household food stocks will be below normal in this scenario. Many households will resort to eating one meal a day, hunting, and gathering wild fruits, berries and leaves to augment their limited access to own-production, and will be moderately food insecure during the first quarter of the coming year.

Figure 2. Projected food security conditions, most-likely scenario, first quarter 2008 (Jan to Mar)



Source: MoA/GoU, WFP/UN agencies, NGOs
Graphics: FEWS NET Uganda

In Karamoja, household stock replenishment will be limited as a result of the below-normal harvest in 2007. The harvest will maintain food access through the first part of the first quarter of 2008, but the hunger season will start in February or March 2008 in this scenario, earlier than the normal start in April. Cereal prices will remain above average through March due to the expected low crop availability and poor road conditions, which will hamper trader mobility to supply markets as well as household access to food from markets. In this scenario, only limited control measures will be implemented against *Pest des Petits Ruminants*, and the disease will continue to afflict small ruminants and reduce household coping capacity. Food security for households in the region will deteriorate with at least 100,000 to 150,000 people facing moderate food insecurity.

In other bimodal areas, the second-season harvest is expected to continue well through early January as a result of the normal to above-normal rains from August to November. As a result, households will have normal access to food during the first quarter of 2008. Access to pasture and water for livestock is expected to be normal, and no increase in the incidence of disease or pests is expected.

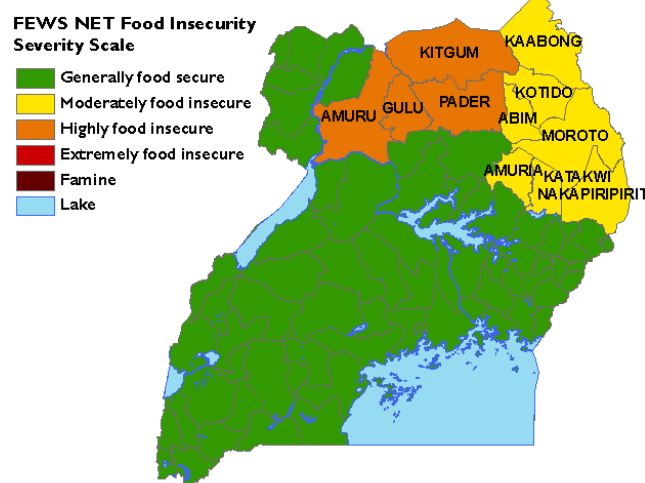
As a result of the conditions expected in this scenario, the number of food insecure people will increase to approximately 1.4 million. About 200,000 of this total will be flood-affected people in Amuria and Katakwi districts, all of whom will require food assistance in the period, which is already programmed for by WFP.

Worst-case food security scenario, January to March 2008

In the worst-case scenario from January to March, increased civil insecurity in the north and Karamoja Region and extreme price increases in flood-affected districts cause food security to deteriorate further for more households in these areas. Although the level of food insecurity in these areas would remain the same as in the most-likely scenario (Figure 3), the severity of food insecurity within each level would increase in this scenario.

In northern Uganda, the peace process could stall, increasing civil instability and re-displacement. Many IDPs would be unable to access fields to finish harvesting their second-season crops. Additionally, a quick return to camps to flee conflict would limit access to basic services. As a result, food security and humanitarian conditions would deteriorate for many households in the first quarter of 2008, and the total number of displaced households would rise. The number of people facing high food insecurity would increase from the most-likely scenario.

Figure 3. Projected food security conditions, worst-case scenario, first quarter 2008 (Jan to Mar)



Source: MoA/GoU, WFP/UN agencies, NGOs
Graphics: FEWS NET Uganda

The worst-case scenario in flood-affected Amuria and Katakwi districts would be characterized by sharply escalating food prices as a result of the below-normal crop production in the first and second seasons. The increased prices will further limit households' access to food on markets in addition to their reduced access from own-consumption. This will be compounded by limited income-earning opportunities during the dry period, when few to no agricultural activities, the main source employment in the areas, are available. Further, the rising number of food insecure households will exert more pressure on resources that provide coping mechanisms - hunting and gathering wild fruits, berries and leaves - resulting in limited supplies and longer distances households have to travel to obtain alternate sources of food. All these will increase households' food insecurity in the two districts as early as January 2008.

In Karamoja, increased civil insecurity related to the Government of Uganda disarmament program could result in reduced household access to food in the worst-case scenario. The 2007 harvest is already expected to be significantly lower than

normal, and increased insecurity would limit farmers' access to fields to harvest their crops. Post-harvest crop losses would result, leading to even lower household stock replenishment. In addition, the civil insecurity and poor road conditions would reduce movement of traders, causing food supplies in markets to decrease, and the population would also have limited access to markets to purchase food to cover their gaps in own-production. The reduced food availability would further raise the already high cereal prices and decrease households' purchasing power. In this scenario, the incidence of *Pest des Petits Ruminants* increases due to a lack of sufficient control measures, thereby reducing households' asset holdings and causing livestock/cereal terms of trade to decrease as livestock prices fall further. More households would face moderate food insecurity throughout the first quarter of 2008.

Food security in other bimodal areas is expected to be normal even in the worst-case scenario, as the 2007 second-season harvests that started in November are still likely to be normal, supporting adequate access to food through the first quarter of 2008. Even in the worst case, no increase in the incidence of crop and livestock diseases is likely.

As a result of these worst-case conditions in northern, eastern and northeastern Uganda, the number of food insecure people would increase to about 1.7 million. Current food aid pipelines are expected to be sufficient to cover an estimated 1.5 million people with food assistance; this would include about 100,000 people in Karamoja affected by the increase in civil insecurity, but an additional 200,000 people in the region would also be food insecure. The same number of IDPs (1.2 million) and flood-affected people in the east (200,000) would require assistance as in the most-likely scenario, although their level of food insecurity would increase within the moderately food insecure range.